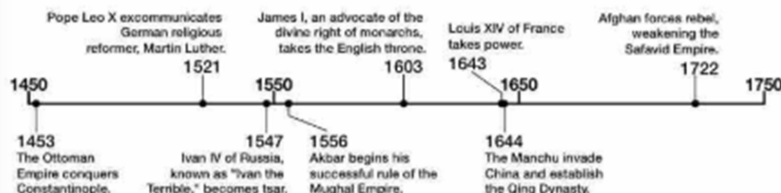# UNIT 3: Land-Based Empires

## Understand the Context

Great land-based empires existed before 1450 and after 1750. However, between these years, several of history's greatest land-based empires reached their peak of wealth and influence. Among these were the Songhai in West Africa; the Safavids based in Persia; the Mughals in northern India; the Ottomans in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa; and the Manchus in eastern Asia. They were multiethnic states that had direct political control over large regions and overland trade routes.

**Expansion** Since these empires measured their power in land, they frequently warred against neighbors over territory. The Manchus, who established the Qing Dynasty in China in 1644, were very successful in this. By 1911, they had tripled the amount of land they controlled.

**Centralization** Land-based empires in this period prospered by consolidating their power in a central government. They employed bureaucratic elites to enforce laws and military professionals to provide defense. To pay for the bureaucrats and soldiers, they collected tributes from weaker states and taxes from their citizens. To demonstrate their wealth and power, they constructed great palaces, religious buildings, and shrines.

**Belief Systems** Land-based empires were often closely tied with particular religious faiths. As a result, political and religious conflicts were intertwined. In Europe, Roman Catholics and Protestants fought wars in which millions of people died. In Asia, the Safavids, who were Shi'a Muslims, and the Mughals, who were Sunni Muslims, were often at war.

**After 1750** Many land-based empires began declining in power in the 18th century. The increasing importance of ethnic identities for individuals, ocean routes for trade, and economic relationships among businesses undermined the unity and influence that land-based empires initially developed.

Pope Leo X excommunicates German religious reformer, Martin Luther. **1521**

James I, an advocate of the divine right of monarchs, takes the English throne. **1603**

Louis XIV of France takes power. **1643**

Afghan forces rebel, weakening the Safavid Empire. **1722**

**1450** — **1550** — **1650** — **1750**

**1453** The Ottoman Empire conquers Constantinople.

**1547** Ivan IV of Russia, known as "Ivan the Terrible," becomes tsar.

**1556** Akbar begins his successful rule of the Mughal Empire.

**1644** The Manchu invade China and establish the Qing Dynasty.

## Topics and Learning Objectives

## 3.1

# European, East Asian, and Gunpowder Empires Expand

*What men call sovereignty is a worldly strife and constant war; Worship of God is the highest throne, the happiest of all estates.*

—Suleiman the Magnificent (1494–1566)

**Essential Question:** How did certain land-based empires develop and expand in the period from 1450–1750?

From its origins in China, gunpowder spread via the trade routes and became a powerful source of change between 1450 and 1750. The term **Gunpowder Empires** refers to large, multiethnic states in Southwest, Central, and South Asia that relied on firearms to conquer and control territories. In addition to Russia, the Gunpowder Empires included three in which Islam was strong: the Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal Empires. Suleiman the Magnificent, quoted above, ruled the Ottoman Empire at its height. Although he declared religious worship the happiest of all practices, he also personally led Ottoman armies in conquering Christian strongholds in Belgrade, Rhodes, and Hungary in Southeastern Europe. The Gunpowder Empire societies tended to be militaristic, yet all three left splendid artistic and architectural legacies, created in part to reflect the legitimacy of their rulers.

The Qing Empire of China also expanded, and although it experienced several invasions, it also prospered during long periods of stability. Europe's expansion involved an even wider exchange network than that which spread gunpowder: transoceanic connections with the Americas. (You will read more about this path to empire expansion in Unit 4.)

Armed trade was common in expanding empires during this period. The different empires traded with one another. However, they kept troops and armaments at the ready in case another empire questioned their right to trade. This type of exchange differed from the free markets of later eras.

## Europe

The year 1450 has traditionally signified the ending of the medieval period and the beginning of the early modern period. The mid-1400s saw the end of a wave of plagues, the conclusion of the Hundred Years' War between

France and England (see Topic 1.6), and the invention of the **Gutenberg printing press** followed by an increase in literacy. After the slow political and economic development of the Middle Ages, several countries in Europe were becoming powerful, wealthy nations. New monarchies began to launch overseas explorations and establish colonies around the world.

The nature of the new monarchies in Europe in the 1500s was the result of the desire of certain leaders to centralize power by controlling taxes, the army, and many aspects of religion. These new monarchs included the Tudors in England, the Valois in France, and Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand in Spain. In each area, bureaucracies increased and the power of the middle class grew at the expense of lords and the churches. For example, the new monarchies moved to curb the private armies of the nobility.

## Russia

Western Europeans were long unsure what to think of Russia: Was Russia more European in its outlook and character, or was it more Asian? Russia was in a pivotal position for trade. It was able to exchange goods and services with other cultures farther east and west. However, Russia remained tightly linked to Europe. Its capital—whether Kiev, St. Petersburg, or Moscow—was located in Europe. Although a product of Mongol influence from Central Asia to the east, Russia was also a product of Europe as a result of Viking invasions and trading.

When **Ivan IV** (ruled 1547–1584), called Ivan the Terrible, was crowned tsar in 1547, he immediately set about to expand the Russian border eastward, first by taking control of the khanates of Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberia held by the descendants of the Golden Horde, the Mongolian conquerors. This expansion came to rely more and more upon the use of gunpowder.

**Control of the Volga** Wanting to expand east to control the fur trade, Ivan IV allowed the Stroganovs, major Russian landowners, to hire bands of fierce peasant warriors known as Cossacks to fight the local tribes and the Siberian khan. The Stroganovs' forces were successful, gaining control of the Volga

**Expansion of Russia**



River, which flows into the Caspian Sea. Possessing this outlet to the sea, Moscow could trade directly with Persia and the Ottoman Empire without having to deal with the strong forces of the Crimean Tartars.

**To the Pacific** Russia continued moving east into Siberia after the reign of Ivan IV. Fur traders and militias defeated one indigenous tribe after another. Missionaries followed, converting many to the Eastern Orthodox faith, although the local shamans, or religious leaders, continued to have influence. By 1639, the Russians had advanced east as far as the Pacific Ocean. Explorations and fur trading expeditions continued across the Pacific to Alaska (1741) and down the coast of North America to California (1814).

## East Asia

China's Yuan Dynasty, founded by Mongol invader Kublai Khan in 1271, was overthrown by the **Ming Dynasty** in 1368 after less than a century in power. Ming rulers managed to stabilize the East Asian region for nearly 300 years. During the Ming era, the Portuguese and other Europeans arrived, aiming to encroach on the Asian trade network. Then, in 1644, the powerful **Manchu** from neighboring Manchuria seized power and established the **Qing Dynasty**, which ruled until 1911. During both of these dynasties, Japan and Korea experienced parallel developments but with unique aspects.

The Ming Dynasty also expanded the size of China, conquering lands in Mongolia and Central Asia. It did not hold them for long, however. In the 1440s, Mongol armies defeated Ming forces and even took the Ming emperor prisoner. In reaction to renewed Mongol power, China's leaders looked to the Great Wall of China for protection. The Wall had not been maintained under Mongol rule, but under the Ming Dynasty it was restored and expanded to help keep out invaders from the north. (Connect: Create a chart comparing the Ming and Yuan Dynasties. See Topic 2.2.)

**Emperor Kangxi** One of China's longest-reigning emperors, **Kangxi** (ruled 1661–1722) presided over a period of stability and expansion during the Qing Dynasty in China. Kangxi sent forces into Taiwan, Mongolia, and Central Asia, incorporating those areas into the empire. China also imposed a protectorate over Tibet, the mountainous land north of India, a policy reflected in China's control of the region today.

**Emperor Qianlong** Another important Qing ruler was **Emperor Qianlong** (ruled 1736–1796), a poet, who was also knowledgeable in art and calligraphy. At the beginning of his reign, the country was well administered and government tax collections were at an all-time high. Qianlong initiated military campaigns in lands west of China, which led to the annexation of Xinjiang accompanied by the mass killings of the local population. Even today, parts of Xinjiang remain troubled. The local Muslim population, called Uighurs, has never fully become incorporated into the rest of Chinese culture.

Qianlong also sent armies into Tibet to install the Dalai Lama on the throne there. A campaign against the Nepalese was successful, forcing them to submit to Chinese rule. However, campaigns against Burma and Vietnam were unsuccessful and costly, resulting in the emptying of the empire's treasury.

**Conflicts with the West** Needing funds, the Qing Dynasty sold limited trading privileges to the European powers but confined them to Guangzhou (also known as Canton). The British were not satisfied with these limited privileges, so they asked for more trading rights in 1793. Emperor Qianlong responded with a letter to King George III stating that the Chinese had no need for British manufactured goods. During the later part of Qianlong's reign, the traditionally efficient Chinese bureaucracy became corrupt, levying high taxes on the people. In response to these high taxes and a desire to restore the Ming Dynasty, a group of peasants organized the White Lotus Rebellion (1796–1804). The Qing government suppressed the uprising brutally, killing around 100,000 peasants.

## Rise of the Islamic Gunpowder Empires

The warrior leaders of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires shared many traits besides being Muslims:

- They descended from Turkic nomads who once lived in Central Asia.
- They spoke a Turkic language.
- They took advantage of power vacuums left by the breakup of Mongol khanates.
- They relied on gunpowder weapons, such as artillery and cannons.

The initial success of the Gunpowder Empires was a result of their own military might along with the weakness and corruption of the regimes that they replaced. As European nations fought among themselves rather than uniting to topple the new powers growing in the east, the Gunpowder Empires further expanded.

**The Rule of Tamerlane** The invasion of Central Asia and the Middle East by **Tamerlane** (Timur the Lame, a Mongol-Turkic ruler of the late 14th century) set the stage for the rise of the Turkic empires. Leading an army partly composed of nomadic invaders from the broad steppes of Eurasia, Tamerlane moved out from the trading city of Samarkand (in modern-day Uzbekistan) to make ruthless conquests in Persia (modern-day Iran) and India. The Eurasian steppes were also the birthplace of the **ghazi ideal**—a model for warrior life that blended the cooperative values of nomadic culture with the willingness to serve as a holy fighter for Islam. According to some historians, the ghazi ideal served as the model for warriors who participated in the rise of the Gunpowder Empires, and it was a model that fit Tamerlane well.

Some historians believe that Tamerlane's violent takeover of areas of Central Asia included the massacre of some 100,000 Hindus before the gates of Delhi in India. The pattern of conquest was marked by violence that resulted in new dynasties: the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Mughals. Nonetheless, Tamerlane's rule in Samarkand encouraged learning and the arts—a trend also typical of these later empires. For example, Tamerlane championed literature, and he himself corresponded with European rulers and wrote his own memoirs. Buildings still standing in the city of Samarkand are lasting reminders of his interest in architecture and decorative arts.

While the empire he created largely fell apart (except for the area that his descendant Babur would take over to create India's Mughal Dynasty), Tamerlane's invasions were a testament to the significance of gunpowder. He used it to build a government dependent upon his military and the use of heavy artillery. He also used it to protect land routes on the Silk Roads. However, he failed to leave an effective political structure in many of the areas he conquered. Without effective government, the expenses of the wars eventually ravaged the empire's economy.

Tamerlane's rule casts light on two major forces that had battled each other continually from the late 10th century to the 14th century—Mongols from the northeast versus Islamic forces from Arabia and the areas around the Mediterranean Sea. These forces would clash continuously with the rise and fall of the three Asian Gunpowder Empires that are the focus of the rest of this chapter.

## The Ottoman Empire

By the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire was already becoming a major power. Extending into modern-day Turkey as well as to the Balkan areas of Europe and parts of North Africa and Southeast Asia, the **Ottoman Empire** was the largest and most enduring of the great Islamic empires of this period. Founded by the Osman Dynasty in the 1300s, the empire lasted until its defeat in 1918 by the Allies in World War I. Thus a single dynasty controlled the empire for more than 600 years.

**Mehmed II** Called the Conqueror, Mehmed II (ruled 1451–1481) firmly established the empire's capital after his forces besieged Constantinople (once the center of the Byzantine Empire) in 1453. Despite its triple fortifications, the city fell as its walls crumbled under the bombardment of Ottoman cannons. The Ottomans used a 26-foot bronze cannon and several other cannons from 15 to 22 feet in length. Under Mehmed II's rule, the city—its name changed to Istanbul—prospered because of its location. A nexus for trade, the city controlled the Bosporus Strait, the only waterway linking the Aegean Sea with the Black Sea.

The armies of Mehmed II next seized lands around the western edge of the Black Sea. Then they moved into the Balkans in Southeast Europe. To counter the power of Venice, an expanding state on the Adriatic Sea with a robust maritime trade, Mehmed strengthened the Ottoman navy and attacked various areas of Italy. Although he did not conquer Venice, he forced the city

to pay him a yearly tax. In the early 16th century, the Ottomans added to their empire lands in present-day Syria, Israel, Egypt, and Algeria. When the Mamluk Dynasty's power declined, Istanbul became a center of Islam. (For more on the Mamluk Empire, see Topic 1.2.)

**Suleiman I** The Ottoman Empire reached its peak under **Suleiman I** (ruled 1520–1566). His armies overran Hungary in 1526 and, by 1529, were hammering at the gates of Vienna, the main city in Austria. Their attempt to take Vienna failed twice, but the ability of the Ottomans to send troops so far into Christian Europe caused great fear there.

In 1522, Suleiman's navy captured the island of Rhodes (now part of Greece) in the eastern Mediterranean, which had long been a stronghold of Christian knights. In the 1550s, the Ottoman navy took control of Tripoli in North Africa. The Ottoman Empire would experience a transformation as the state adapted to new internal and external pressures. A period of reform would follow by the 18th century. Challenges in defending Ottoman territory against foreign invasion and occupation led to the Ottoman defeat and dissolution by 1922.

## The Safavids

The Safavid dynasty had its origin in the Safavid order of Sufism, established in the northern Azerbaijan region (Iran). An early Safavid military hero named **Ismail** conquered most of Persia and pushed into Iraq. Although only 14 or 15 years old, he soon conquered all of Iran and was proclaimed **shah** (equivalent to king or emperor) in 1501.

The **Safavid Empire** had two problems. First, despite being on the Arabian Sea (part of the Indian Ocean), the empire did not have a real navy. Second, the Safavids lacked natural defenses. Nevertheless, the Safavids rose to power in the 1500s due to their land-based military might and strong leadership.

Called Abbas the Great, **Shah Abbas I** (ruled 1588–1629) presided over the Safavid Empire at its height. His troops included soldiers—often Christian boys pressed into service—from as far northwest as Georgia in Russia. Abbas imported weaponry from Europe and also relied on Europeans to advise his troops about this newly acquired military technology. Slowly, the shahs came to control religion as well as politics. Using Shi'a Islam as a unifying force, Shah Ismail built a power base that supported his rule and denied legitimacy to any Sunni. This strict adherence to Shi'a Islam caused frequent hostilities with the Ottoman Empire, a stronghold of Sunni Islam. In 1541, Safavid forces were stopped by the Ottomans at Tabriz, a city in Persia that became part of the border between Sunni and Shi'a societies. The hostility between the two groups lives on in present-day Iraq and Iran.

Conflicts between Ottomans and Safavids were not entirely religious, however. Another conflict arose over control of overland trade routes. The Ottomans used trade embargoes, official bans on trade, consistently against the Safavid silk traders as a way to assert dominance over their eastern rival.

**Women in the Safavid Empire** Women are rarely mentioned in local Safavid histories; however, Safavid women were permitted to participate in their societies. While Safavid women were still veiled and restricted in their movements, as was traditional in the region, they had access to rights provided by Islamic law for inheritance and, in extreme cases, divorce.

## Mughal India

In the 1520s, Babur, a descendant of Tamerlane (see Topic 2.2), founded a 300-year dynasty during a time when India was in disarray. He completed conquests in northern India and, under the new Mughal name, formed a central government similar to that of Suleiman in Turkey. **Akbar**, Babur's grandson, achieved grand religious and political goals.

The **Mughal Empire** under Akbar was one of the richest and best-governed states in the world. Overseas trade flourished during the relatively peaceful period; Arab traders conducted most of the commerce. Traded goods included textiles, tropical foods, spices, and precious stones, all of which were often exchanged for gold and silver. Trade within the borders of the empire was carried on by merchant castes. Members of the merchant castes were allowed to participate in banking and the production of handicrafts.

**Castes,** or *jatis*, are strict social groupings designated at birth. The caste system divides Hindu people into four categories: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and the Shudras. Outside of the system are the achhoots, or the Dalits, the untouchables. The Indian caste system is the basis of educational and vocational opportunities for Indian society.
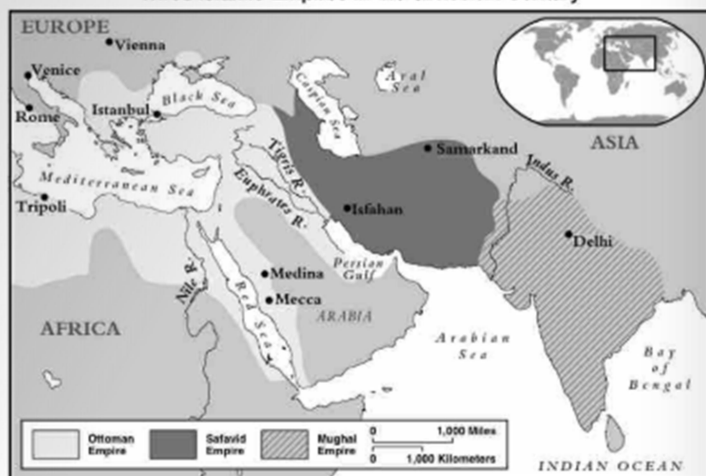
Mughal India flourished from Babur's time through the early 18th century. Magnificent architectural accomplishments are remaining testaments to the wealth and sophistication of the Mughal empire.

## Decline of the Gunpowder Empires

The Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires declined as Western Europe grew in strength economically and militarily—particularly in terms of sea power. Unlike these three Islamic empires, Russia modernized and reorganized its army, modeling it after the armies of England, France, and the Netherlands. The Islamic empires did not modernize and, as a result, Russia remained powerful enough to survive as an independent nation-state, while the other Gunpowder Empires fell.

**Decline of the Ottoman Empire** In 1571, after Suleiman's death, a European force made up mostly of Spaniards and Venetians defeated the Ottomans in a great naval conflict known as the Battle of Lepanto. After the reign of Suleiman, the Ottomans fell victim to weak sultans and strong European neighbors. In time, the empire became known as the Sick Man of Europe. Successors to Suleiman were often held hostage to "harem politics," the efforts of wives and concubines of the sultan to promote their own children

### Three Islamic Empires in the Sixteenth Century



In expanding the empire to the south, he drained the empire's treasury and was unable to put down peasant uprisings. Some of these uprisings were sparked by Aurangzeb's insistence on an austere and pious Islamic lifestyle and an intolerance of minority religions—Sikhs, Hindus, and others. His policies led to frequent conflicts and rebellions.

There were revolts as well among the Hindu and Islamic princes. The empire grew increasingly unstable after his death, which allowed the British and French to gain more and more economic power in India. The British would take political power away from the Mughals in the 19th century.

---

**KEY TERMS BY THEME**

| **GOVERNMENT:** China | **GOVERNMENT:** Turkic | **GOVERNMENT:** Leaders |
|---|---|---|
| Ming Dynasty | Gunpowder Empires | Ivan IV (Russia) |
| Manchu | Ottoman Empire | Tamerlane |
| Qing Dynasty | shah | Suleiman I (Ottoman Empire) |
| Kangxi | Safavid Empire | Ismail (Safavid Empire) |
| Emperor Qianlong | Mughal Empire | Shah Abbas I (Safavid Empire) |
| **TECHNOLOGY:** Literacy | **SOCIETY:** Turkic | Akbar (Mughal Empire) |
| Gutenberg printing press | ghazi ideal | |
| | castes | |

**Source:** Wikimedia Commons
**Author:** shakko

This statue was made after Tamerlane was exhumed in 1941. It represents accurate facial reconstruction based on his skull. Examination of his skeleton also revealed that he was indeed "lame"—he kept his right knee bent all the time. He also had a withered right arm. Tamerlane's invasion of Central Asia and the Middle East set the stage for the rise of the Turkic empires.



as likely heirs to the throne. In this way, some women became powerful behind the scenes. The failed Siege of Vienna in 1683 marked a turning point in Ottoman domination in Eastern Europe. British and French involvement in the Ottoman territories, Greece's independence in 1821, and the Russian expansion in the 19th century further weakened the Ottoman Empire.

**Safavid Decline** The ineffectual leaders who followed Shah Abbas combined lavish lifestyles and military spending with falling revenues, resulting in a weakened economy. In 1722, Safavid forces were not able to quell a rebellion by the heavily oppressed Sunni Pashtuns in present-day Afghanistan. The Afghan forces went on to sack Isfahan, and their leader, Mahmud, declared himself Shah of Persia. While the Safavid Dynasty remained nominally in control, the resulting chaos was an impediment to centralization and tax collection. Taking advantage of the weakened Safavids, the Ottomans and the Russians were able to seize territories. The Safavid Dynasty declined rapidly until it was replaced by the Zand Dynasty in 1760.

**Mughal Decline** Shah Jahan's son and successor, Aurangzeb (ruled 1658–1707), inherited an empire weakened by corruption and the failure to keep up with the military innovations of external enemies. Nevertheless, Aurangzeb hoped to increase the size of the empire and bring all of India under Muslim rule. Additionally, he wanted to rid the empire of its Hindu influences.

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

**Questions 1 to 3 refer to the passage below.**

"Throughout the sixteenth century, the Safavi [Safavid] empire remained a profoundly disturbing force in the Moslem [Muslim] world, dedicated to the defense and propagation of Shi'a doctrines at home and abroad. This policy implied a normal state of hostility with the Ottoman empire, punctuated only briefly by periods of peace. By the seventeenth century, however, when the Safavi empire reached its apogee [peak] under Shah Abbas the Great (1587–1629), the fanaticism of the Shi'a revolution had faded, at least in court circles; and a lasting peace with the Ottomans was concluded in 1639."

William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West*, 1963

1. Which would be the most useful source of evidence to support McNeill's contention that "the Safavi [Safavid] empire remained a profoundly disturbing force in the Moslem [Muslim] world"?

   (A) writings by Safavids about Shi'a beliefs

   (B) writings by modern-day Muslim historians

   (C) writings by Ottoman religious leaders of that time about the Safavids

   (D) writings by archaeologists about discoveries of Safavid and Ottoman religious relics

2. Today, Iran and Turkey are often political rivals. This passage suggests that this rivalry is based on historical conflicts over

   (A) democracy and political extremism

   (B) control of land and natural resources

   (C) the role of leaders such as the shah and emperor

   (D) how to practice Islam correctly

3. What brought an end to the "normal state of hostility" between the Safavids and Ottomans mentioned in the passage?

   (A) Safavid fervor for its brand of Islam slowly declined until the two empires stopped fighting.

   (B) The constant fighting increased the respect of the empires for each other, which eventually led to peace between them.

   (C) Both sides united to fight against European Christian forces that threatened them.

   (D) The Ottomans slowly gained greater power and were able to stop the agitation by the Safavids.

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **Use the passage below to answer all parts of the question that follows.**

   "[H]aving on one occasion asked my father [Akbar] the reason why he had forbidden any one to prevent or interfere with the building of these haunts of idolatry [Hindu temples], his reply was...: 'I find myself a powerful monarch, the shadow of God upon earth. I have seen that he bestows the blessings of his gracious providence upon all his creatures without distinction. Ill [badly] should I discharge the duties of my exalted station, were I to withhold my compassion and indulgence from any of those entrusted to my charge. With all of the human race, with all of God's creatures, I am at peace: why then should I permit myself, under any consideration, to be the cause of molestation or aggression to any one? Besides, are not five parts in six of mankind either Hindus or aliens to the faith; and were I to be governed by motives of the kind suggested in your inquiry, what alternative do I have but to put them all to death! I have thought it therefore my wisest plan to let these men alone.'"

   Jahangir, Mughal emperor from 1605 to 1627, *Memoirs*

   (A) Describe ONE example of Akbar's display of religious tolerance.

   (B) Describe ONE way in which Akbar's response to religious diversity compared to the practices of the Mongols during the 13th century.

   (C) Explain ONE way in which Akbar's practice of tolerance was different from the religious tolerance of the Safavids.

2. **Answer all parts of the question that follows.**

   (A) Explain ONE reason the Gunpowder Empires rose during the period 1450–1750.

   (B) Explain ONE way in which the cultures of the Gunpowder Empires differed from one another.

   (C) Explain ONE way in which technological advances affected the expansion of the land-based empires.

In this topic, you read about the expansion of empires between 1450 and 1750, especially in Russia, China, and Southwest, Central, and South Asia. Although it may seem obvious what an empire is, historians have thought carefully about the *concept* of an empire. A concept is a general, abstract idea often formed from specific instances.

For example, Paul James and Tom Nairn, editors of *Globalization and Violence*, conceptualize "empire" this way:

> "As a general phenomenon, empires extend relations of power across territorial spaces over which they have no prior or given legal sovereignty, and where, in one or more of the domains of economics, politics, and culture, they gain some measure of extensive hegemony over those spaces for the purpose of extracting or accruing value."

Steven Howe, in his book *Empire*, argues that an empire typically also has diverse ethnic, national, cultural, and religious elements under its power.

If you combine these conceptualizations and then break them down into their component parts, you would likely come up with these features of empires:

- extension of power over spaces in which they have no previous or legal control
- exertion of major control of economic, political, or cultural aspects of subjects
- extraction or accumulation of value as a result of domination
- control of diverse ethnic, national, cultural, and religious elements

*Choose two of the following empires, and explain how well they fit with the concepts of empire outlined above.*

1. Qing Dynasty
2. Ottoman Empire
3. Safavid Empire
4. Mughal Empire

**REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how certain land-based empires developed and expanded in the period from 1450–1750.

# Empires: Administrations

*The state of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth: for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God's throne, but even by God himself they are called gods.*

—King James I (1566–1625)

**Essential Question:** How did rulers in land-based empires legitimize and consolidate their power from 1450 to 1750?

By the end of the 16th century, centralization of power by controlling taxes, the army, and some aspects of religion coalesced into a system of government that led to a powerful monarch in England and absolute monarchy in France. In other states, different methods were used to solidify authority: building temples, as with the Inca; paying the military elite a salary, as with the samurai in Japan; and forcibly establishing a captive governmental bureaucracy, as with the Ottoman devshirme system.

Rulers of empires in the years 1450 to 1750 developed methods for assuring they maintained control of all the regions of their empires. Some of the successful methods included using bureaucratic elites to oversee sections of the empire and developing a professional military.

## Centralizing Control in Europe

England's King James I believed in the **divine right of kings**, a common claim from the Middle Ages that the right to rule was given to a king by God. Under this belief, a king was a political and religious authority. As seen in the quote above, James believed himself outside of the law and any earthly authority and saw any challenge toward him as a challenge to God.

**England's Gentry Officials**  In England, the Tudors (ruled 1485–1603) relied on **justices of the peace,** officials selected by the landed gentry to "swear that as Justices of the Peace . . . in all articles in the King's Commission to you directed, ye shall do equal right to the poor and to the rich after your cunning wit, and power, and after the laws and customs of the realm and statutes thereof made," according to their oath of office. In other words, their job was to maintain peace in the counties of England, even settling some legal matters, and to carry out the monarch's laws. The number and responsibilities

of the justices of the peace increased through the years of Tudor rule, and they became among the most important and powerful groups in the kingdom. Under Tudor rule, the power of feudal lords weakened. Many seats in the House of Commons in Parliament were occupied by justices of the peace. The justices of the peace as well as the Parliament, which had been established in 1265, gave legitimacy to the monarch's claim to authority.

Parliament also checked the monarch's powers. In 1689, England's rulers William and Mary signed the **English Bill of Rights**, which assured individual civil liberties. For example, legal process was required before someone could be arrested and detained. The Bill of Rights also guaranteed protection against tyranny of the monarchy by requiring the agreement of Parliament on matters of taxation and raising an army.

**Absolutism in France** In contrast to developments in England, the French government became more **absolute**—directed by one source of power, the king, with complete authority—in the 17th and 18th centuries. Henry IV (ruled 1589–1610) of the House of Valois listened to his advisor Jean Bodin, who advocated the divine right of the monarchy. Building on these ideas, Louis XIII (ruled 1610–1643) and his minister **Cardinal Richelieu** moved to even greater centralization of the government and development of the system of intendants. These **intendants** were royal officials—bureaucratic elites— sent out to the provinces to execute the orders of the central government. The intendants themselves were sometimes called **tax farmers** because they oversaw the collection of various taxes in support of the royal governments.

The Sun King, **Louis XIV** (ruled 1643–1715), espoused a theory of divine right and was a virtual dictator. His aims were twofold, just as those of Richelieu had been: He wanted to hold absolute power and expand French borders. Louis declared that he was the state: "L'etat, c'est moi." He combined the lawmaking and the justice system in his own person—he was absolute. He kept nobles close to him in his palace at **Versailles**, making it difficult for them to act independently or plot against him. Louis and his successors' refusal to share power eventually weakened the French government.

| Kangxi and Louis XIV | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Emperor Kangxi** | **Both** | **King Louis XIV** |
| • Ruled Qing Dynasty China for 61 years | • Became ruler during childhood | • Ruled France for 72 years |
| • Encouraged introduction of Western education | • Spoke multiple languages | • Known as the Sun King or Louis the Great |
| • Opened ports to foreign trade | • Supported the arts | • Built palace at Versailles |
| • Extended control over Tibet | • Promoted study of sciences | • Extended France's eastern borders |
| | • Loved landscape gardens | • Known as a symbol of absolute monarchy |
| | • Ruled during golden age of their empire | |

Source: Getty Images

Every aspect of the Palace at Versailles was built to glorify King Louis XIV, including more than 700 rooms, 60 staircases, and gardens that cover more than 30,000 acres and are decorated with 400 sculptures and 1,400 fountains. The Sun King moved the French government to Versailles in 1682.

## Reigning in Control of the Russian Empire

Social hierarchy in Moscow was almost static—much as it had been in Kievan Russia earlier. The noble landowning class, the **boyars**, stood at the top of the social pyramid. Below them were the merchants. Last and most numerous were the peasants, who would gradually sink more and more deeply into debt and, as a result, into **serfdom**. Serfs were peasants who received a plot of land and protection from a noble. In return, the serfs were bound to that land and had little personal freedom. Transfers of land ownership to another noble included control over the serfs on that land.

**The Efforts of Ivan IV** The boyar class experienced tensions with the rulers similar to the tensions between nobles and rulers in Western Europe. Boyars of Novgorod had opposed the expansionist policies of **Ivan IV**, so Ivan punished them after his forces defeated Novgorod. Ivan IV confiscated the lands of his boyar opponents and forced them and their families to move to Moscow. Like Louis XIV, he wanted to keep an eye on the nobility.

To further control the boyars, Ivan established a paramilitary force loyal to him called the *oprichnina*. Dressed in black and traveling quickly on horseback, the members showed fierce loyalty to Ivan. They were drawn from lower-level bureaucrats and merchants to assure their loyalty to Ivan rather than to the boyars. The oprichnina's methods would be reflected later in the development of the Russian secret police. (Connect: Create a table comparing Ivan IV and Sundiata. See Topic 2.4.)

**Peter the Great** The **Romanov Dynasty** took control of Russia in 1613 after a period of turmoil following Ivan's death in 1584. Under the autocratic control of the Romanovs, three main groups in Russia had conflicting desires and agendas: the Church, bent on conserving traditional values and beliefs; the boyars, desiring to gain and hold power; and members of the tsar's royal family. The rise to power of **Peter I**, also known as Peter the Great (ruled 1682–1725), illustrates these conflicting ambitions. First, to gain full control of the throne, Peter had to defeat his half-sister Sophia and her supporters, a boyar-led elite military corps called the Streltsy. He consolidated power by forcing Sophia into a convent. Later, the Streltsy rebelled against Peter's reign, so he temporarily disbanded them and then integrated them into Russia's regular army.

Peter the Great was known as the Defender of Orthodoxy, participating closely in ecclesiastical [church] affairs. However, Peter would eventually lose the support of the Russian clergy over his reforms. Later in his reign, Peter reorganized the Russian government by creating provinces (first 8 and later 50 administrative divisions). Provincial officials received a salary, replacing the old system of local officials "feeding off the land" (getting money through bribes, fees, and taxes). Another government reform was the creation of a senate, a council to advise government officials when Peter was away.

## Centralizing Control in the Ottoman Empire

To ensure their control over large areas, the Ottoman sultans used a selection system called **devshirme** to staff their military and their government. This system began in the late 14th century and expanded in the 15th and 16th centuries. Through this system, Christian boys who were subjects of the empire were recruited by force to serve in the Ottoman government. Boys ages 8 to 20 were taken each year from conquered Christian lands in Europe.

The system of devshirme developed from an earlier system of slavery in the Ottoman Empire. In both systems, slaves were considered tribute owed to the empire after conquest, which was typically one-fifth of the conquered land's wealth. Since Islamic law prohibited enslavement of "people of the book"—Muslims and Jews—Christian boys were forcibly removed from their families, especially from Balkan territories.

The Christian boys were taught various skills in politics, the arts, and the military and received a very high level of education. The most famous group, called **Janissaries**, formed elite forces in the Ottoman army. Other boys were groomed to become administrators of the newly conquered territories; some were scribes, tax collectors, and even diplomats. They were indoctrinated to be fiercely loyal to the sultan—some served as bodyguards. In some ways, becoming a Janissary provided a path of upward mobility in the Ottoman Empire, even though the Janissaries continued to be called "slaves of the state." Some parents even wanted their sons to be recruited into the service.

## Centralizing Control in East and South Asia

Following the collapse of the Mongol-led Yuan Dynasty, the Ming ruled in China from 1368–1644. The Ming Dynasty in China wanted to erase the influence of Mongol rulers of the Yuan Dynasty. To help accomplish this goal, the Ming brought back the traditional civil service exam, improved education by establishing a national school system, and reestablished the bureaucracy, which had fallen into disuse under the Mongols. (See Topic 2.2.) During the Qing Dynasty, in the later part of Qianlong's reign, the traditionally efficient Chinese bureaucracy became corrupt, levying high taxes on the people. The Qing government used harsh military control to put down a rebellion against these developments and maintain its authority.

**Consolidating Power in Japan** Military leaders called shoguns ruled Japan in the emperor's name from the 12th to the 15th centuries. Yet conflict between landholding aristocrats called **daimyo** left Japan in disarray. Each daimyo had an army of warriors (known as samurai); ambition to conquer more territory; and power to rule his fiefdoms as he saw fit. The samurai were salaried, paid first in rice and later in gold, which gave them significant economic power. Finally, just as gunpowder weapons enabled the rise of new empires in Turkey, Persia, and India, gunpowder weapons helped a series of three powerful daimyo to gradually unify Japan. (Connect: Write a paragraph connecting shogun rule with the rule of the daimyo. See Topic 1.1.)

The first of these powerful daimyo was Oda Nobunaga. Armed with muskets purchased from Portuguese traders, Nobunaga and his samurai took over Kyoto in 1568. He then began to extend his power, forcing daimyo in the lands around Kyoto to submit. Nobunaga had unified about one-third of what is today Japan when he was assassinated in 1582.

Nobunaga's successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, continued expanding the territory until most of what we now know as Japan was under his control. After his death in 1598, the center of power shifted to the city of **Edo** (Tokyo), controlled by the daimyo **Tokugawa Ieyasu** (ruled 1600–1616), who was declared shogun in 1603. His successors would continue to rule Japan into the mid-19th century, in an era known as the **Period of Great Peace**.

The **Tokugawa shogunate** set about reorganizing the governance of Japan in order to centralize control over what was essentially a feudal system. Japan was divided into 250 hans, or territories, each of which was controlled by a daimyo who had his own army and was fairly independent. However, the Tokugawa government required that daimyo maintain residences both in their home territory and also in the capital; if the daimyo himself was visiting his home territory, his family had to stay in Tokyo, essentially as hostages. This kept the daimyo under the control of the shogunate, reducing them to landlords who managed the hans, rather than independent leaders.

**Consolidating Mughal Power in South Asia** Ruling from 1556 to 1605, **Akbar** proved to be the most capable of the Mughal rulers. For the first 40 years of his rule, he defeated Hindu armies and extended his empire

southward and westward. From his capital in **Delhi**, Akbar established an efficient government and a system of fairly administered laws. For example, all his people had the right to appeal to him for final judgment in any lawsuit. As Akbar's fame spread, capable men from many parts of Central Asia came to serve him. They helped Akbar create a strong, centralized government and an effective civil service. Paid government officials called **zamindars** were in charge of specific duties, such as taxation, construction, and the water supply.

Later, they were given grants of land rather than salaries but were permitted to keep a portion of the taxes paid by local peasants, who contributed one-third of their produce to the government. The system worked well under Akbar. Under the rulers who came after him, though, the zamindars began to keep more of the taxes that they collected. With this money, they built personal armies of soldiers and civilians loyal to them.

## Legitimizing Power through Religion and Art

European governments sought to legitimize the authority of the monarch through the idea of the divine right of monarchy. (For more information about the divine right of monarchy, see Topic 3.3.) They also built impressive structures, such as the Palace of Versailles in France, to demonstrate their power and glory. Governments in other parts of the world followed similar patterns to consolidate and legitimize their authority. (See Topic 1.4 for links among religion, grand temples and pyramids, human sacrifice, and political power in the Mexica and Incan cultures.)

**Peter and St. Petersburg**  When Peter the Great seized lands on the Baltic Sea from Sweden, the conquest gave Russia its own warm-water port on the Baltic—St. Petersburg. Peter moved the Russian capital from Moscow to St. Petersburg so he could keep watch on the boyars there, who were doing their required state service by working in his government.

The new city became a testament to Peter's determination to have his own capital. Architects laid out streets in a rectangular grid, unlike the irregular pattern of Moscow and other cities. Peasants and Swedish prisoners of war were forced to work, draining marshes and building streets and government structures. In the mid-18th century, workers built the famous Winter Palace. It was designed in a European rather than a Byzantine style to show Peter's admiration of Europe and its rulers.

**Askia the Great of Songhai**  Askia Mohammad I, or **Askia the Great**, came to power in 1493. He claimed his predecessor, Sunni Ali, was not a faithful Muslim. Like Mansa Musa of Mali, Askia the Great promoted Islam throughout his kingdom and made an elaborate pilgrimage to Mecca. Under his leadership, Songhai became the largest kingdom in its day in West Africa. Askia made Islam Songhai's official religion in an attempt to unite his empire. In addition to legitimizing his rule through promoting Islam, he also supported an efficient bureaucracy to bring the empire together.

**Shah Jahan**  Mughal India produced a number of magnificent architectural accomplishments, including the **Taj Mahal**, built by **Shah Jahan** (ruled 1628–1658) as a tomb for his wife. Mughal rulers also beautified Delhi and had forts built. The craftspeople and builders of Mughal India combined the arts of Islam (calligraphy, illumination of manuscripts, and ceramics) with local arts to create magnificent, airy structures with decorative geometric designs. All these accomplishments showed the power of the rulers.

**Ottoman Architectural and Artistic Achievements**  Tremendous changes in government and religion took place in Ottoman territory. However, the arts, the culture, and the economy showed continuities, though they now legitimized the rule of the Ottomans. Constantinople, renamed Istanbul, remained the western end of the overland Silk Roads, and the Grand Bazaar there continued to be full of foreign imports. Coffeehouses, although banned by Islamic law, continued to do a thriving business throughout the towns of the empire.


Source: Thinkstock


Source: Thinkstock


Source: Thinkstock

The Islamic Gunpowder Empires built monumental architecture with spiritual significance. The Ottomans built the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul (top). The Safavids built the Mosque of Isfahan (lower left). The Mughals built the Taj Mahal, a mausoleum, in Agra. (lower right).

Istanbul grew more beautiful and expanded across both sides of the Strait of Bosporus. One famous landmark is the royal residence of the sultans, *Topkapi Palace*. Mehmed II (lived 1432–1481) began construction on this landmark. Suleiman I (lived 1494–1566) ordered many mosques, forts, and other great buildings constructed in the cities under his control. For example, he ordered the construction in Istanbul of the magnificent Suleymaniye Mosque.

Istanbul remained a center of arts and learning. Poets and scholars from across Asia met in coffeehouses and gardens. They discussed works by Aristotle and other Greek writers, as well as the works of many Arabic scholars. Cultural contributions of the Ottomans included the restoration of some of the glorious buildings of Constantinople, most notably the cathedral of Saint Sophia (which the Ottomans turned into a grand mosque). From the time of Mehmed II, who established a workshop for their production, Ottoman miniature paintings and illuminated manuscripts became famous.

**French Architecture** The spacious and elegant palace at Versailles became a political instrument. Louis XIV entertained the nobles there and kept them from conducting business elsewhere, such as fomenting rebellion in their home provinces. Louis XIV's grand buildings at Versailles helped legitimize his power. The palace at Versailles, for example, could accommodate hundreds of guests. During the rule of Louis XIV, some 1,000 employees worked in the palace or on the grounds.

## Financing Empires

As in other matters of building and maintaining empires, different methods of raising money worked—or fell short—in different empires. In all of the world's empires, raising money to fund the goals of imperial expansion and extend state power was a key endeavor.

**Taxation in Russia** Peter established new industries owned by the state, especially shipyards in St. Petersburg and iron mines in the Ural Mountains. He also encouraged private industries such as metallurgy [technology of metal products], woodwork, gunpowder, leather, paper, and mining. He brought in Western European naval engineers to build ships according to Western models.

When industrialization failed to bring in the revenue Peter needed for his military ventures, he raised taxes and began to compel workers to work in the shipyards—a sort of urban extension of serfdom. In 1718, the tax on land in Russia was replaced by a tax on heads (individuals), and peasants became more oppressed than ever.

**Ottoman and Mughal Taxation** To finance an economy backed by a powerful military, the Ottomans levied taxes on the peasants and used **tax farming** to collect it. The tax farmers—local officials and private tax collectors distant from the central government—grew wealthy and corrupt from skimming money from the taxes in their areas, as some of the zamindars did in the Mughal Empire. Agricultural villages continued to be burdened with the upkeep of officers and troops. This burden of taxes and the military would eventually contribute to the economic decline of the empire.

**Tax Collection in the Ming Dynasty** In Ming China as well as in the Ottoman Empire, tax collection was the responsibility of private citizens, in this case wealthy families, each seeing to the collection of land taxes in their area of the countryside. Land taxes made up the bulk of the taxes collected, and the rates tended to be low. Taxes were collected in the form of grains and, later, silver. Some grains were stored in local facilities. Others were sent on the Grand Canal to military locations. The state also collected taxes on salt, wine, and other goods. For many years, the vaults stored a surplus of grains. However, after about 1580, wars, extravagant imperial spending, and the repression of rebellions left the dynasty in bankruptcy.

**Tributes** Empires, including China, also collected **tributes** from other states as a way to demand recognition of their power and authority. Typically as a form of wealth, tributes were given as a sign of respect, submission, or allegiance. For example, Korea was a tributary state for China. The Mexica had extensive tributary arrangements from the people they conquered, although most Aztec citizens, merchants, and artisans paid taxes. An Aztec official was stationed in each capital to collect tributes from local officials.

The Songhai Empire also had tributary states. Askia the Great assigned governors and officials to preside over tributary states in the Niger Valley. As long as local officials obeyed Songhai policies, they could rule their districts.

---

**KEY TERMS BY THEME**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **GOVERNMENT: Europe**<br>divine right of kings | **GOVERNMENT: Ottoman Empire**<br>devshirme<br>Janissaries | **ECONOMY: France**<br>tax farmers |
| **GOVERNMENT: England**<br>justices of the peace<br>English Bill of Rights | **GOVERNMENT: Japan**<br>daimyo<br>Edo | **ECONOMY: Ottoman Empire**<br>tax farming |
| **GOVERNMENT: France**<br>absolute<br>Cardinal Richelieu<br>intendants<br>Louis XIV | Tokugawa Ieyasu<br>Period of Great Peace<br>Tokugawa shogunate | **ECONOMY: China**<br>tributes |
| | **GOVERNMENT: Songhai**<br>Askia the Great | **ECONOMY: Mughal Empire**<br>zamindars |
| **GOVERNMENT: Russia**<br>Ivan IV<br>Romanov Dynasty<br>Peter I | **GOVERNMENT: Mughal Empire**<br>Akbar<br>Delhi<br>Shah Jahan | **CULTURE: Mughal Empire**<br>Taj Mahal<br><br>**CULTURE: France**<br>Versailles<br><br>**SOCIETY: Russia**<br>boyars<br>serfdom |

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

### Questions 1 to 3 refer to the passage below.

"Demonized as an enemy of the faith by the Muslim narrative sources, yet lionized as a warrior hero in the oral tradition, Sunni Ali, who reigned from 1464 to 1492, is one of the most controversial figures of the African Middle Ages. . . . Relying on a swift and mobile cavalry force as well as on naval control of the Niger River, Sunni Ali had conquered the agriculturally rich central Niger or 'inland delta,' including the wealthy and scholarly cities of Timbuktu and Jenne, by the 1470s. . . . He was well aware that a vast empire could not be held together by military conquests alone, but need[ed] an effective and efficient administrative structure as well. Indeed, the organization of Songhay [Songhai] government which was developed to a great degree under Sunni Ali differed substantially from previous Sudanic patterns of empire. These had been based more on alliances and relationships with tributary states than on the high degree of centralization characteristic of Songhay [Songhai]."

J. Rotondo-McCord, "Kingdoms of the Medieval Sudan," Xavier University,
http://webusers.xula.edu/jrotondo/Kingdoms/Songhay/SunniAli01.html

1. The Songhai Empire was like the empire of Japan because the Songhai

   (A) created a strong central government to rule the empire

   (B) expanded the territory under its control

   (C) was ruled by a Muslim

   (D) was the first empire to trade gold extensively

2. The Songhai Empire under Sunni Ali was different from the empire under Askia the Great because

   (A) Sunni Ali made a pilgrimage to Mecca

   (B) Askia used religion to legitimize his control

   (C) Sunni Ali made Songhai the largest kingdom in West Africa

   (D) Askia used zamindars to collect taxes

3. How did Askia the Great challenge Sunni Ali's legitimacy?

   (A) He claimed Sunni Ali was a weak military commander.

   (B) He questioned Sunni Ali's faithfulness to the principles of Islam.

   (C) He established strong tributary ties that had more allegiances to him than to Sunni Ali.

   (D) He reformed taxation policies throughout the kingdom.

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **Use the passage below to answer all parts of the question that follows.**

   "Farmers of all provinces are strictly forbidden to have in their possession any swords, short swords, bows, spears, firearms, or other types of weapons. If unnecessary implements of war are kept, the collection of annual rent *(nengu)* may become more difficult, and without provocation uprisings can [occur]. . . . The heads of the provinces, samurai who receive a grant of land, and deputies must collect all the weapons described above and submit them to Hideyoshi's government. . . . If farmers possess only agricultural implements and devote themselves exclusively to cultivating the fields, they and their descendants will prosper. This compassionate concern for the well-being of the farms is the reason for the issuance of this edict, and such concern is the foundation for the peace and security of the country and the joy and happiness of all the people."

   Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Imperial Regent of Japan, edicts issued
   in 1588

   (A) Describe ONE technological advance that allowed Hideyoshi and other shoguns to enforce such edicts over farmers.

   (B) Describe ONE way in which Hideyoshi's goals were similar to those of Louis XIV.

   (C) Explain ONE interpretation historians could develop of Hideyoshi's ideas about the Japanese economy from this piece of evidence.

2. **Answer all parts of the question that follows.**

   (A) Describe ONE way in which political structures of Europeans differed from those of the Ottomans in the period 1450–1750.

   (B) Describe ONE way in which political structures of the Aztecs were similar to those in China in the period 1450–1750.

   (C) Explain ONE reason that the Mughal leaders constructed impressive buildings for worship and as memorials during the period of 1450–1750.

One way historians contextualize is by examining what came before and what came after an event or development within a culture (see page 14). Contextualization is also useful across cultures. To contextualize a specific development across cultures, ask: In what other cultures were there similar developments? In what ways were those developments similar to the specific development in the culture under study? In what ways were those developments different from the specific development in the culture under study? As you answer these questions, think about origins, purposes, and outcomes.

*Consider the development of the devshirme system. Within the context of global slavery between 1450 and 1750, how was devshirme like or unlike slavery elsewhere, and why? Complete a chart like the one below to contextualize devshirme in a broader setting. Then draw a conclusion about the devshirme system.*

| Region/Culture | Origins | Purposes | Outcomes |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ottomans | Tribute from conquered people | Educated and trained for administrative and military service and paid a salary | Became influential members of society and first standing army |
| Americas | | | |
| China | | | |
| Africa | | | |

### REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how rulers in land-based empires legitimized and consolidated their power from 1450 to 1750.

# Empires: Belief Systems

*Paris is well worth a Mass.*

–Henry of Navarre, King of France (ruled 1589–1610)

**Essential Question:** How did different belief systems endure or change during the period from 1450–1750?

Religion, a key factor in the expansion of empires, was a divisive force as much as it was a unifying one. Christianity remained a dominant force in Europe, but its split into several factions during the 16th and 17th centuries led to significant historical changes. French King Henry IV, often known as Henry of Navarre, converted to Catholicism in 1593 for the sake of solidifying his power and ensuring peace, as the quote above suggests. His action demonstrates the willingness of monarchs to approach ruling with practicality rather than theology. Henry IV also sanctioned religious toleration of the Huguenots (French Calvinists).

Islam, too, experienced a split, and political rivalries between the Ottoman and Safavid empires deepened the breach between the Sunni and Shi'a branches of the religion. At the same time, Sikhism provided a way to combine Hindu and Sufi Muslim beliefs.

## Protestant Reformation

The Roman Catholic Church faced many challenges in the European shift from feudalism to centralized governments. International in organization and influence and boasting a large bureaucracy of its own, the Church was subject to corruption. Efforts to curb corruption resulted in numerous Church councils and reform movements. However, efforts at reform were unsuccessful.

Theological disagreements began to surface as well. John Wycliffe and the Lollards in England in the late 14th century argued that priests were unnecessary for salvation. Wycliffe was vilified for translating parts of the Bible into the English vernacular to make it available to the mass of believers, who neither read nor understood Latin. In the early 14th century, Hussites, followers of Jan Hus in Bohemia, were declared heretics for beliefs similar to Wycliffe's. Hus himself was burned at the stake. Huldrych Zwingli campaigned in Geneva for a religion that would follow the exact teachings

of the scriptures and discard customs that had evolved later. For example, he opposed the requirement for celibacy of the clergy because he argued that the rule was imposed long after the scriptures were written.

The power of the Church suffered during the so-called Babylonian Captivity (1309–1377), when the papacy was located in France rather than in Rome. The Captivity gave French rulers greater influence over the Church, even the ability to decide who should be pope. Newly centralizing rulers who coveted Church lands and authority began confiscating wealthy Catholic monasteries and sometimes established their own churches. In the eyes of believers, the Church suffered further when it failed to stop the Black Death. (Connect: Write a paragraph connecting the Reformation with the problems of the medieval Church. See Topic 1.6.)

**Lutheranism** A monk named **Martin Luther** in Wittenberg, a German city in the Holy Roman Empire (800–1806), concluded that several traditional Church practices violated biblical teachings. He objected to the sale of **indulgences**, which granted a person absolution from the punishments for sin, and to **simony**, the selling of church offices. As a result, Luther defiantly challenged the Church by nailing his charges, the *95 Theses*, to a church door. Luther advocated for the theological stance of "sola fide," faith alone, for the basis of salvation for the Christian believer.

The Church reacted harshly. It, and the local political ruler, needed the money these practices generated. Luther persisted. In January 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. Several German political leaders saw an opportunity to free themselves from the power of the pope. They sided with Luther. Soon, what had begun as a minor academic debate became a major split in the Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire.

Luther was not a political or social revolutionary. (When German peasants rebelled, he did not support them.) But his theological ideas had social impact on the clergy as well as on women. Luther taught that women could have direct access to God just as men could. Luther's emphasis promoted women's literacy. He believed that women had significant roles in the family, particularly teaching their children to read the Bible. However, Protestants generally did not organize convents. As a result, Protestant women did not have the opportunity to become leaders in a vital institution the way Roman Catholic women did.

**Calvinism** The French theologian **John Calvin** broke with the Catholic Church around 1530. In 1536, he authored *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* and helped reform the religious community in Geneva, Switzerland. The **elect**, those **predestined** to go to heaven, ran the community, which was based on plain living, simple church buildings, and governance by the elders of the church. Calvin's followers in France were called Huguenots. Other offshoots of Calvinism included the Reformed Church of Scotland, led by John Knox, and the **Puritans** in England and later in Boston, who wanted to purify the Church of England of Catholic remnants. Historian and sociologist Max Weber pointed out that an important socioeconomic impact

of Calvinism is contained in the phrase "Protestant work ethic." Calvinists were encouraged to work hard and reinvest their profits; prosperity ostensibly showed that God favored their obedience and hard work. Prosperity also indicated their position among the elect. Calvinists viewed their work ethic as righteous living that elevated them to positions of secular leadership. Together, the various reform efforts are known as the **Protestant Reformation**.



Dominant Faiths in Western Europe in 1560

**Anglicanism** The last of the three major figures of the Reformation was England's King **Henry VIII** (ruled 1509–1547). Henry wanted a male heir to succeed him. After his wife gave birth to several daughters, Henry asked the pope to annul his marriage so he could marry another woman, **Anne Boleyn**. But the pope refused out of worry over the reaction of **Charles V**, the powerful emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Henry, with the approval of the English Parliament, set himself up as head of the new Church of England, or **Anglican Church**—one that would be free of control by the pope in Rome.

## The Orthodox Church and Reforms in Russia

Charles V had revitalized the concept of the universal monarchy and spent most of his reign defending the integrity of the Holy Roman Empire from the Protestant Reformation. Like Charles V, Peter the Great of Russia asserted his authority as he moved against the Orthodox Church. The Church had long been the force unifying the Russian people and the tsars, who claimed to rule

by divine right. Peter confirmed his power over the Church by abolishing the position of patriarch, the head of the Church, and incorporating the Church into the government. In place of the patriarch, he established the **Holy Synod**, composed of clergymen overseen by a secular official who answered to the tsar. Peter raised the minimum age for men to become eligible to be monks to 50, preferring that the young serve first as soldiers. Peter's reforms were not welcomed by many peasants and Old Believers, a sect that opposed earlier reforms.

## Counter-Reformation or Catholic Reformation

The Roman Catholic Church, all-powerful in Europe since the fall of Rome, did not sit quietly by and let the Reformation groups take over. Instead, it embarked on a vigorous **Counter-Reformation** to fight against the Protestant attacks. A three-pronged strategy yielded such gains for the Church that it remains the largest Christian denomination in the world:

- The Church increased the use of the **Inquisition**, which had been established in the late 12th century to root out and punish nonbelievers. The Inquisition sometimes allowed the use of torture to achieve its ends.

- The **Jesuits**, or Society of Jesus, a religious order founded in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola, also opposed the spread of Protestantism. The Jesuits undertook missionary activity throughout the Spanish Empire as well as in Japan and India.

- The **Council of Trent** (1545–1563) corrected some of the worst of the Church's abuses and concentrated on reaffirming the rituals such as marriage and other sacraments improving the education of priests. The Council also published the *Index of Prohibited Books*, a list of writings that the Church banned, including Protestant copies of the Bible and the writings of Copernicus.

The Counter-Reformation was successful in that Catholicism remained predominant in the areas of Western Europe near the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, later colonies of the European powers often followed the lead of the home country in religion. Therefore, most of the people in the Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonies became Catholic.

Charles V abdicated as ruler of the Holy Roman Empire in 1555, discouraged by his inability to stop the spread of Lutheranism. He left Spain to his son **Philip II** and the Holy Roman Empire to his brother Ferdinand. Philip II took the Catholic crusade to the Netherlands and ruled its 17 provinces from 1556 to 1581. He later tried to conquer and convert England. In 1588, his **Spanish Armada** was defeated by English naval power.

## Wars of Religion

Europe's religious divisions led to frequent wars. In 1546 and 1547, the forces of Charles V fought the German Lutheran Schmalkaldic League. Conflict between Lutherans and the Holy Roman Empire resulted in the 1555 **Peace of Augsburg**, which allowed each German state to choose whether its ruler would be Catholic or Lutheran. As a result, churches and inhabitants were forced to practice the state religion. People who refused could move to another state where their preferred religion was practiced.

**France** In France, Catholics and Huguenots fought for nearly half a century. Then, in 1593, King Henry IV, who had been raised as a Protestant, tried to unify the country by becoming a Catholic, reportedly saying that "Paris is well worth a Mass." Five years later, in another step to bring peace, Henry issued the **Edict of Nantes**, which allowed the Huguenots to practice their faith. The edict provided religious toleration in France for the next 87 years. In 1685, Louis XIV of France issued the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. As a result, France experienced social and economic effects. For example, many skilled craftsmen left France, taking knowledge of important industry techniques and styles with them.

**Thirty Years' War** The final great religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Europe culminated in the **Thirty Years' War** (1618–1648), which led to economic catastrophe for most of the continent. The Thirty Years' War was initially the result of religious conflict within the Holy Roman Empire; it gradually developed into a more general conflict involving European powers. Much of the destruction was caused by troops who were allowed to loot as part of their compensation. The war resulted in widespread famine, starvation, and disease.

The war culminated in the **Peace of Westphalia**, which allowed each area of the Holy Roman Empire to select one of three religious options: Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism. After this settlement, France, Spain, and Italy were predominantly Catholic. Northern Europe was either Lutheran or Calvinist. England was Protestant with a state church.

Allowing rulers of various areas of the Holy Roman Empire to choose a denomination had important political effects. It gave the countries and duchies much more autonomy than they previously had. Consequently, the states of Prussia (now part of Germany) and Austria began to assert themselves, although they still formally belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. Prussia, after suffering tremendous destruction during the Thirty Years' War, developed a strong military to protect itself. The Prussian military tradition would become a key factor in European politics into the 20th century.

**Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires, 1450–1750**

| | Ottoman Empire | Safavid Empire | Mughal Empire |
|---|---|---|---|
| Religion | • Mostly Sunni with some measure of tolerance under Suleiman<br>• Less tolerance under later rulers | • Mostly Shi'a<br>• No tolerance; Ismail I made conversion mandatory for Sunni population | • Tolerance under Akbar, but his blend of Islam and Hinduism did not prove popular<br>• Less tolerance under later rulers |

## Islamic Religious Schisms

As in the Holy Roman Empire, religion and the state were closely tied in Islamic empires. Islam continued to be an enduring belief system, spreading its sphere of influence despite factions that developed within it.

**Ottoman Empire** Until 1453, much of the area had been controlled by the Byzantine Empire and followed the Eastern Orthodox religion. After the siege of Constantinople, the area became Ottoman and the dominant religion became Islam. A sultan replaced the emperor, and the Byzantine Empire's Justinian Law was replaced by **shariah**. This is a strict Islamic legal system that deals with all aspects of life, such as criminal justice, marital laws, and issues of inheritance.

**The Safavids** Using Shi'a Islam as a unifying force, Shah Ismail built a power base that supported his rule and denied legitimacy to any Sunni. This strict adherence to Shi'a Islam caused frequent hostilities within the Ottoman Empire.

**Mughal Toleration and Prosperity** Akbar tolerated all religions. He gave money or land to Hindus and Muslims. He also gave money for a Catholic church in Goa, on India's southwest coast. He provided land grants for the relatively new religion of **Sikhism**, which developed from Hinduism and may have been influenced by the Islamic mysticism known as Sufism. (See Topics 1.2 and 1.3.) Sikhism, a monotheistic faith that recognized the rights of other faiths to exist, became the fifth most popular religion in the world by the 21st century. Akbar tried to ease tensions between Hindus and Muslims. He gave Hindus positions in his government—zamindars of high and low positions could be Hindu—and married Hindu wives. He exempted Hindus from poll taxes paid by non-Muslims in the empire. Because he enjoyed religious discussions, Akbar invited Catholic priests to Delhi to explain Christianity to him.

Regarded as one of the world's outstanding rulers, Akbar encouraged learning, art, architecture, and literature. He tried (and failed) to prohibit child marriages and sati, the ritual in which widows killed themselves by jumping on the funeral pyres of their husbands. He died in 1605 without successfully converting his Hindu and Islamic subjects to the religion called Din-i Ilahi, or "divine faith," which he had promoted to reconcile Hinduism and Islam.

**Religious Schisms Through History**

| Religion and Region | Schism | Leaders | Nature of Dispute |
|---|---|---|---|
| Buddhism in India | Theravada and Mahayana (approximately 300 B.C.E. to 100 C.E.) | • Four councils held after the Buddha's death | Disagreement between emphasis on personal meditation (Theravada) and public rituals and compassion (Mahayana) |
| Islam in Middle East | Sunni and Shi'a (632 C.E.) | • Abu Bakr<br>• Ali | Disagreement over the rightful successor to Muhammad as leader of the Islamic community |
| Christianity in Europe and Byzantine Empire | Roman Catholics and Orthodox (1054 C.E.) | • Pope Leo IX<br>• Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius | Disagreement over the role of faith, issues of salvation. Disagreement over the authority of the pope and differences in rituals |
| Christianity in Europe | Roman Catholics and Protestants (1517 C.E.) | • Martin Luther<br>• John Calvin<br>• King Henry VIII | Disagreements over the role of faith, the role of the clergy and the pope, and how to interpret the Bible |

## Scientific Revolution

In the early 1600s, scientific thinking gained popularity in northern Europe as trends in Renaissance ideas, curiosity, investigation, and discovery spread. In a period of religious schisms, scientific thought represented a very different kind of thinking—one based on reason rather than on faith—that would set in motion a monumental historical change. In 1620, English scientist and philosopher Francis Bacon developed an early scientific method called **empiricism**, which insisted upon the collection of data to back up a hypothesis. Bacon challenged traditional ideas that had been accepted for centuries and replace them with ones that could be demonstrated with evidence.

Scientific thinking advanced through the correspondence of leading scholars with one another, even during the religious wars, and by the establishment of a Royal Academy of Science in France and England. Sir Isaac Newton, combining Galileo's laws of terrestrial motion and Johannes Kepler's laws of planetary motion, published a work on gravitational force called *Principia* (1687). The ideas in *Principia* influenced science and mathematics and helped lead to a new vision of the world. Many intellectuals thought that science showed that the world was ordered and rational and that natural laws applied to the rational and orderly progress of governments and society. This thinking is a key to the Enlightenment (see Topic 5.1).

## KEY TERMS BY THEME

| GOVERNMENT: Europe | CULTURE: Protestantism | CULTURE: Islam |
|---|---|---|
| Henry VIII | Martin Luther | shariah |
| Anne Boleyn | 95 Theses | Sikhism |
| Charles V | John Calvin | |
| Philip II | elect | CULTURE: Science |
| Spanish Armada | predestined | empiricism |
| Peace of Augsburg | Puritans | |
| Edict of Nantes | Protestant Reformation | |
| Thirty Years' War | Anglican Church | |
| Peace of Westphalia | | |

**CULTURE: Catholicism**
indulgences
simony
Holy Synod
Counter-Reformation
Inquisition
Jesuits
Council of Trent

## MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

**Questions 1 to 3 refer to the passage below.**

"He is very valiant and has a great liking for warfare and weapons of war, which he has constantly in his hands: we have been eye-witnesses of this because, whenever we were with him, he was adjusting his [swords], testing his [muskets], etc . . . This is the great experience, which he has obtained of warfare over so many years, that he makes it in person and from the first has made him a fine soldier and very skilled, and his men so dexterous that they are little behind our men in Europe. He has introduced into his militia the use of and esteem for [muskets], in which they are very practiced. Therefore it is that his realm has been so much extended on all sides. . . . All the above mentioned soldiers, who will total some 100,000, receive pay for the whole year."

<div align="right">Father Simon, a European Roman Catholic priest, in a report<br>to the pope on meeting the Safavid Shah Abbas I, 1588</div>

1. Which claim about Father Simon's purpose for meeting Shah Abbas I is best supported by the above passage?

   (A) Simon was impressed by the new technology used by the Safavids.

   (B) Simon wanted the pope to know of the Safavids' military power.

   (C) Simon hoped the pope would sell new weapons to the Safavids.

   (D) Simon thought the Safavids could teach Europeans about how to organize a military.

2. Which most strongly contributed to the historical development reflected in Father Simon's description of the Safavid military structure?

   (A) Safavid intolerance for the Sunni population

   (B) Mughal support for Sikhism

   (C) Ottoman development of shariah

   (D) the Thirty Years' War

3. This source supports the claim that the Safavids were similar to the Ottomans and the Mughals because all three

   (A) used gunpowder weapons

   (B) practiced identical religious beliefs

   (C) organized empires using the same methods

   (D) were ahead of the Europeans in military power

## SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **Use the passage below to answer all parts of the question that follows.**

   "Let no one think that this Commandment entirely forbids the arts of painting, engraving, or sculpture. The Scriptures inform us that God Himself commanded to be made images of Cherubim [a category of angel], and also the brazen serpent. The interpretation, therefore, at which we must arrive, is that images are prohibited only inasmuch as they are used as deities to receive adoration, and so to injure the true worship of God. . . .

   He [the pastor] will also inform the unlettered . . . of the use of images, that they are intended to instruct in the history of the Old and New Testaments, and to revive from time to time their memory; that thus, moved by the contemplation of heavenly things, we may be the more ardently inflamed to adore and love God Himself. He should, also, point out that the images of the Saints are placed in churches, not only to be honored, but also that they may admonish us by their examples to imitate their lives and virtues."

   <div align="right">Council of Trent: Catechism for Parish Priests, 1566</div>

   (A) Describe ONE way in which the passage reflects a response to the Protestant Reformation during the period 1450 to 1750.

   (B) Explain ONE way in which the passage reflects how the centralization of states impacted the role of religion during the period 1450 to 1750.

   (C) Explain ONE way in which the passage reflects how the challenges to the Roman Catholic Church were similar to the religious challenges in the Gunpowder Empires between 1450 and 1750.

**2. Answer all parts of the question that follows.**

(A) Describe ONE way in which the Protestant Reformation and the Scientific Revolution were similar in the period 1450–1750.

(B) Explain ONE way in which Renaissance ideals influenced European states' policies in the period 1450–1750.

(C) Explain ONE way in which Renaissance ideals influenced the Protestant Reformation in the period 1450–1750.

---

**THINK AS A HISTORIAN:** EXPLAIN POINT OF VIEW IN A SOURCE

While historians try to describe the past fairly, their nationality, ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics can shape their values. In turn, these values shape how they see the past. An interpretation of history is a historian's view of why events happened and why they were significant.

*In each pair of statements, which one more clearly represents a point of view of the past that might reflect the values of the writer? Explain the point of view of the choice you identify.*

**1. Protestant Reformation**

a. "Paris is well worth a Mass," King Henry IV wrote in the 16th century, shedding light on how he and other monarchs of his time were willing to bargain and compromise, ruling with practicality rather than theology.

b. A Roman Catholic monk, Martin Luther, presented a set of objections to various Church practices, a document known as the *95 Theses*, to Church leaders in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517.

**2. Religion and Toleration**

a. The final great religious war was the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), which involved the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, France, and Spain.

b. "The humanist project for changing the world was soon caught up in a 'theological road-rage' of grimly competing religious orthodoxies. The liberation symbolized by 1517 took effect in the savage suppression of the Peasants' Revolt, and in the relentless oppression of radicals by Protestants and Catholics alike, culminating in the evisceration of Europe in the Thirty Years' War." —Fleur Houston

---

**REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

1. In one to three paragraphs, explain how different belief systems endured or changed during the period from 1450–1750.

---

# Comparison in Land-Based Empires

*Foreigners appreciate only military power. . . . Thus, they submit to us wholeheartedly and do not dare to despise China once we display our hunting techniques to them.*

—Quinlong, Emperor of China, 1735

**Essential Question:** By what methods did empires increase their societal and cultural influence from c. 1450–c. 1750?

Building and maintaining large land-based empires is a major theme in the period c. 1450–c. 1750. These empires grew as they incorporated lands they conquered. Their rulers implemented policies to solidify or legitimize their rule over a diverse population. However, the conquered often did not totally assimilate to the life and culture of their conquerors. In some cases the conquered influenced the conquerors, helping to shape a blended culture. The interconnection of hemispheres also led to blended cultures.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

As part of its conquest of present-day Hungary, the Ottoman Empire under Suleiman I besieged the Habsburg-controlled city of Esztergom in 1543 with the help of French artillery. The figure at the far left is a Janissary. Suleiman is on horseback.

Not all empires were able to maintain their authority. For example, the Gunpowder Empires declined, unable to compete with European trading companies, especially the British, and unable to resolve conflicts of heirs motivated by harem politics (see Topic 3.1). Other factors in the decline included weak or corrupt leadership and failure to keep up with developments in military and naval technology. The expensive armies each empire needed to maintain control placed harsh financial burdens on the peasants and villages in the form of taxes and other obligations. Religious conflicts also divided and weakened the Gunpowder Empires.

A deep religious schism divided Muslims and Hindus in Mughal India, just as a schism divided Sunni Ottomans and Shi'a Safavids and set the stage for conflict between the present-day countries of Iraq and Iran. (Connect: Write a paragraph comparing the decline of Mughal India with the decline of the Mongol Empire. See Topic 2.1.)

## Military Might

The armies of these land-based empires were well trained, well organized, well equipped, and well led. Empires in Eurasia all relied on gunpowder weapons, including large cannons, in support of more traditional cavalry and infantry units. In the Americas, the fierceness of both the Aztec and Incan warriors allowed them to intimidate and conquer neighboring territories.

**Soldiers** In some cases, the rulers of land-based empires developed an elite group of soldiers to use in solidifying their control over their territories. For instance, both the Ottoman sultan and Safavid shah used slave soldiers to offset the power of troops who had more loyalty to their tribe or local governor than to the sultan or shah. The Janissaries in the Ottoman Empire helped to preserve the power of the Ottoman sultan and the Ghulams helped to protect the Safavid shah from rival clans. Both the Janissaries and the Ghulams were often recruited from minority religious or ethnic groups found within the empires. The Janissaries were often slaves taken from Christian areas of the Ottoman Empire, while the Ghulams came from the Georgian, Armenian, or Circassian populations within the Safavid Empire. The system of taking slaves as part of a "blood" tax (in the Ottoman Empire this was known as devshirme) or tribute was not limited to the Ottomans or Safavids. Aztecs also required slaves or prisoners as part of the tribute offered by conquered states.

**Warfare** These strong militaries did not prevent conflict among the land-based empires. The Ottoman Empire and Safavid Empire went to war over the territorial claims each had at its border. However, religion also played a role as an underlying cause of this conflict. The Ottoman Empire was a predominantly Sunni Muslim state, while the Safavids were mainly Shi'a. Each believed the other to practice a heretical type of Islam and was willing to go to war over this split. Religion was not as important a factor in the conflict between the

Safavids and the Mughals as it was in the Ottoman-Safavid War. Instead, control over resources and trade routes in present-day Afghanistan was at the core of the war between these two land-based empires.

Two Muslim powers conflicted when Morocco invaded the Songhai Empire in 1591. Moroccan forces sacked the capital of Gao and ended the empire. However, Morocco was unable to hold onto all the Songhai territory.

## Centralized Bureaucracy

Controlling a large area with such diverse populations required land-based empires to establish an organized and centralized bureaucracy. Recruiting bureaucratic elites took several forms. In the Ming and Manchu dynasties of China, the civil service examination system was used to assess the abilities of the members of the scholar-gentry who wished to enter government service. In the Ottoman Empire, the devshirme system provided the sultan with a ready-made pool of civil servants strictly loyal to him, while in the Safavid Empire, the shah would enlist a class of bureaucrats from the Persian population of the empire, known as "the men of the pen."

| Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires, 1450–1750 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Ottoman Empire** | **Safavid Empire** | **Mughal Empire** |
| **Taxes** | • Taxes on non-Muslims<br>• Taxes on peasants | • Taxation policies used to encourage adherence to Shi'a Islam | • Taxes on unbelievers were abolished by Akbar but reinstated later<br>• Taxes on peasants |
| **Military** | • Warriors (often trained Janissaries) were granted villages to provide for their subsistence<br>• The military functioned as a dual authority with central government<br>• Strong navy | • Warriors were the Qizilbash, Turcoman militants who helped establish the empire<br>• Leaders made the military independent of central government<br>• No significant navy | • Warriors were granted villages to provide their upkeep<br>• Officials known as zamindars made the military independent of central government<br>• Small navy |

In the Songhai Empire, the *mansa*, a Mandika word meaning "sultan," employed bureaucrats from the scholarly class educated in the schools, or madrasas, of Timbuktu. While the Incas did not use a dedicated scholarly class to rule their empire as the Ming and Manchus did, they did organize

their empire into a federal system of provinces headed by nobles loyal to the emperor. Further, these nobles oversaw a very organized political structure that was divided on the basis of a decimal system.

Despite its many similarities to other land empires, the Aztec Empire was less centralized and bureaucratic than the other land empires. The Aztec created a tributary empire and had little to no direct control over the territory within the region of Mesoamerica. It kept control over this region through force, fear, and intimidation rather than through a centralized bureaucracy.

A portrayal of Aztec warriors from the Florentine Codex, written between 1540 and 1549.

**Taxation** Some form of taxation or revenue collection was necessary to support the bureaucracy and military of the land-based empires of this period. Taxation took many forms in these empires:

- **Mughal zamindar tax collection:** Mughal emperors appointed tax officers or zamindars to collect taxes from the peasant class based on land and production.

- **Ottoman tax farming:** Rather than employing government tax collectors, the Ottoman sultans appointed "tax farmers" to pay an annual fixed sum of money for an area to the central government and then recoup the outlay by collecting money or salable goods from the residents of the area. Many Janissaries were paid their salaries in this manner by collecting more money than they paid out to the central government.

- **Aztec tribute lists:** As the Aztecs (or Mexica) formed a tributary empire, the main source of revenue that supported the Aztec noble class and military came from yearly offerings or tributes from the surrounding areas. The lists included whichever local product was made or valued but could also include a demand for people, many of whom became human sacrifices in Aztec religious rituals.

- **Ming collection of "hard currency:"** The Ming Empire, like its predecessors, issued paper currency as a means to facilitate trade and tax collection; however the use of paper money led to rampant counterfeiting and hyperinflation. The Ming then ordered that all taxes should be paid in the form of rice, and later silver coins, known as "hard currency."

## Striving for Legitimacy

While the diversity of the populations of the land-based empires was beneficial to the economic and political strength of the empires, ruling over populations that included many ethnicities, religions, and tribal ties was challenging. Therefore many rulers turned to other than political means to unite their subjects in their loyalty to the state. Rulers used religion, art, and monumental architecture to legitimize their rule. Akbar attempted a syncretic approach to religion in the Mughal Empire, but he had little success in that area.

| Sources of Legitimacy | Examples |
|---|---|
| Religion | • Rulers in Islamic empires used references to the title "caliph," or successor to the Prophet.<br>• European monarchs claim to "divine right" that gave the monarch the mandate to rule by the Christian God.<br>• Conversion to Islam of Songhai rulers and noble class provides a religious and legal structure to the empire.<br>• Aztec (Mexica) use human sacrifice in religious rituals. |
| Art | • Portraits of the Qing emperors and other high officials<br>• Miniature paintings in the Ottoman Empire<br>• Financial support of artists by European rulers |
| Monumental Architecture | • Mausolea, such as the Taj Mahal and mosques in the Mughal Empire<br>• European palaces, such as the Palace of Versailles in France and El Escorial in Spain |

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. **Comparison** Create a chart comparing the effects of transoceanic connections in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. Include the impact on trade, on relations with other empires, and on culture.

2. In one to three paragraphs, explain the methods empires used to increase their societal and cultural influence from c. 1450 to c. 1750.

# UNIT 3 REVIEW

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WHY DID THE ISLAMIC GUNPOWDER EMPIRES RISE AND DECLINE?

The term "Gunpowder Empires" was coined by Marshall G. S. Hodgson in the 1970s to refer to the large land empires of Southwestern and South Asia that flourished the from 1450 to 1750 (*The Venture of Islam: The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times*). The term is often used to describe the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals.

**Trade and the Rise of Empires** Kenneth Pomeranz and Steven Topik, in their 2005 book *The World That Trade Created*, described the empires as part of the growing global economy. These authors, taking economic and social perspectives, used coffee as one example of the international character of consumer goods: "Coffee's role in sociability and prestige in Europe was enhanced by the arrival of emissaries of the Ottoman sultan in France and Austria in 1665–1666, who poured the exotic liquor for their aristocratic European guests during extravagant soirees."

**Reasons for Decline** Historians have given various reasons for their declines, but most fall into three categories: (1) ineffectiveness; (2) intolerance of minorities; and (3) failure to modernize. One reviewer summarized historian Vladimir Minorsky's reasons for the decline of the Safavid Empire:

  a. decline of theocratic ideology
  b. opposition between old and new elements in the military class
  c. disturbance in equilibrium among the service classes, which lost interest in the cause they were supporting
  d. the "shadow government" represented by the harem
  e. degeneration of the dynasty as a result of its insular nature

**Military Weakness** William McNeill pointed out that rulers and military administrators did not try to keep up with "subsequent European innovations in military and naval matters, leaving them woefully exposed to attack." McNeill noted that the Ottomans' guns were able to defeat their Islamic rivals, the Safavids, because "until about 1600, the Ottoman army remained technically and in every way in the very forefront of military proficiency." Nevertheless, after the time of Suleiman, leaders did not themselves lead soldiers in battle, and military discipline declined just as efficiency and technology began to lag behind Western Europe.

**Tolerance and Intolerance** Amy Chua, *Day of Empire: How Hyperpowers Rise to Global Dominance—and Why They Fall*, suggested a different reason for the eventual failure of the Gunpowder Empires. Her thesis was that intolerance ultimately became an obstacle to retaining great power. She suggested that empires were successful in holding their power when they were at their most religiously and ethnically tolerant. This thesis can help explain why the Ottoman Empire, with its relative tolerance, outlived the more intolerant Safavid and Mughal Empires.

**Develop an Argument:** Evaluate the extent to which historical evidence supports one of the perspectives on the rise and decline of the Gunpowder Empires.

## WRITE AS A HISTORIAN: ANALYZE THE QUESTION

As you have read, the first stage in writing a long essay is to carefully read and analyze the question so you know exactly what the framework is for your response. (See page 183.) In addition to surface-level analysis of the terms of the question, you also apply the historical thinking skill of analyzing historical developments and processes for a deeper understanding of the question.

Suppose, for example, you choose to answer the following long essay question: "Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which religion created unity or conflict between 1450 and 1750 in Europe and in South Asia." For a surface level analysis, you could complete a chart like the one below.

| Key Terms and Framework | |
|---|---|
| Key Terms | Argument, evaluate, extent, role of religion, unity, and conflict |
| Framework | *Geographic Areas:* Europe and South Asia *Time Period:* 1450–1750 |
| Reasoning Process | Comparison |

For a deeper analysis of the question, use the thinking skill of analyzing historical developments and processes. Ask questions such as the following to arrive at a deeper understanding of the question.

| Questions for Deeper Analysis |
|---|
| What is the role of religion in the development of unity? |
| What is the role of religion in the development of conflict? |
| How did religion develop unity in Europe? |
| How did religion develop conflict in Europe? |
| How did religion develop unity in South Asia? |
| How did religion develop conflict in South Asia? |
| What other developments between 1450 and 1750 were taking place in Europe that are relevant to the role of religion? |
| What other developments between 1450 and 1750 were taking place in South Asia that are relevant to the role of religion? |

In the next stage of writing, these questions will help you focus the evidence you gather to answer the question.

**Application:** Suppose you choose to answer the following long essay question: "Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which continuity or change occurred in the participation of China in the expanding global trade networks from 1450 to 1750." Complete a Key Terms and Framework chart for the question to understand the basic requirements of the task. Then create a Questions for Deeper Analysis chart to help you develop a more complex understanding of the question.

*For current free response question samples, visit: https://apcentral.collegeboard. org/courses/ap-world-history/exam*

## LONG ESSAY QUESTIONS

**Directions:** Write essay responses to 1, 2, and EITHER 3 or 4. The suggested writing time for each essay is 40 minutes.

1. In Africa and Eurasia from 1450 to 1750, various forms of Islam and Christianity were key factors in the expansion of empires.

   Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which the various belief systems showed continuity or change over time during the period from 1450 to 1750.

2. Rulers of empires in Africa and Eurasia from 1450 to 1750 developed new methods of governing to solidify their authority over their citizens.

   Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which changes in government caused the consolidation of power in empires in the period 1450 to 1750.

3. New technology, including gunpowder weapons, shaped empires in throughout southern and southwestern Asia from 1450 to 1750.

   Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which various land-based empires in southern and southwestern Asia developed in similar ways from 1450 to 1750.

4. New technology, including gunpowder weapons, shaped empires in Russia and China from 1450 to 1750.

   Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which various land-based empires in Russia and China developed in similar ways from 1450 to 1750.

In each response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.
- Use historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity or change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

Source: *AP® World History Course and Exam Description.* Effective Fall 2019.

## DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

**Directions:** Question 1 is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise. You are advised to spend 15 minutes planning and 45 minutes writing your answer.

1. Using the documents and your knowledge of world history, evaluate the extent to which Peter the Great took steps during his reign (1682–1725) to modernize Russia and transform it into a major European power.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least six documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

### Document 1

Source: Bishop Burnet of England describing Peter the Great, 1698.

He was desirous to understand our doctrine, but he did not seem disposed to mend matters in [the Russian empire]. He was, indeed, resolved to encourage learning and to polish his people by sending some of them to travel in other countries and to draw strangers to come and live among them. He seemed apprehensive still of his sister's intrigues. There was a mixture both of passion and severity in his temper. He is resolute, but understands little of war, and seemed not at all inquisitive that way.

### Document 2

Source: Peter I, Decree on Compulsory Education of the Russian Nobility.

Send to every [region] some persons from mathematical schools to teach the children of the nobility—except those of freeholders and government clerks—mathematics and geometry; as a penalty . . . no one will be allowed to marry unless he learns these [subjects].

## Document 3

**Source:** Peter I, Decree on the Invitation of Foreigners, 1702.

Since our accession to the throne all our efforts and intentions have tended to govern this realm in such a way that all of our subjects should, through our care for the general good, become more and more prosperous. For this end we have always tried to maintain internal order, to defend the state against invasion, and in every possible way to improve and to extend trade. With this purpose we have been compelled to make some necessary and salutary changes in the administration, in order that our subjects might more easily gain a knowledge of matters of which they were before ignorant, and become more skillful in their commercial relations. We have therefore given orders, made dispositions, and founded institutions indispensable for increasing our trade with foreigners, and shall do the same in the future. . . . To attain these worthy aims, we have endeavored to improve our military forces, which are the protection of our State, so that our troops may consist of well-drilled men, maintained in perfect order and discipline. In order to obtain greater improvement in this respect, and to encourage foreigners, who are able to assist us in this way, as well as artisans profitable to the State, to come in numbers to our country, we have issued this manifesto.

## Document 4

**Source:** Peter I, Decree on Western Dress, 1701.

Western dress shall be worn by all the boyars, members of our councils and of our court . . . gentry of Moscow, secretaries . . . provincial gentry, gosti [merchants], government officials, streltsy, members of the guilds purveying for our household, citizens of Moscow of all ranks, and residents of provincial cities . . . excepting the clergy and peasant tillers of the soil. The upper dress shall be of French or Saxon cut, and the lower dress . . . —waistcoat, trousers, boots, shoes, and hats—shall be of the German type. They shall also ride German saddles. Likewise the womenfolk of all ranks, including the priests', deacons', and church attendants' wives, the wives of the dragoons, the soldiers, and the streltsy, and their children, shall wear Western dresses, hats, jackets, and underwear—undervests and petticoats—and shoes. From now on no one of the above mentioned is to wear Russian dress or Circassian coats, sheepskin coats, or Russian peasant coats, trousers, boots, and shoes. It is also forbidden to ride Russian saddles, and the craftsmen shall not manufacture them or sell them at the marketplaces.

## Document 5

**Source:** Statute for the College of Manufactures, 1723.

His Imperial Majesty is diligently striving to establish and develop in the Russian Empire such manufacturing plants and factories as are found in other states, for the general welfare and prosperity of his subjects. He [therefore] most graciously charges the College of Manufactures to exert itself in devising the means to introduce, with the least expense, and to spread in the Russian Empire these and other ingenious arts, and especially those for which materials can be found within the empire. . . . His Imperial Majesty gives permission to everyone, without distinction of rank or condition, to open factories wherever he may find suitable. . . .

Factory owners must be closely supervised, in order that they have at their plants good and experienced [foreign] master craftsmen, who are able to train Russians in such a way that these, in turn, may themselves become masters, so that their produce may bring glory to the Russian manufactures.

## Document 6

**Source:** Jean Rousset de Missy, *Life of Peter the Great*, c. 1730.

The tsar labored at the reform of fashions, or, more properly speaking, of dress. Until that time the Russians had always worn long beards, which they cherished and preserved with much care, allowing them to hang down on their bosoms, without even cutting the moustache. With these long beards they wore the hair very short, except the ecclesiastics, who, to distinguish themselves, wore it very long. The tsar, in order to reform that custom, ordered that gentlemen, merchants, and other subjects, except priests and peasants, should each pay a tax of one hundred rubles a year if they wished to keep their beards; the commoners had to pay one kopek each. Officials were stationed at the gates of the towns to collect that tax, which the Russians regarded as an enormous sin on the part of the tsar and as a thing which tended to the abolition of their religion.

These insinuations, which came from the priests, occasioned the publication of many pamphlets in Moscow, where for that reason alone the tsar was regarded as a tyrant and a pagan; and there were many old Russians who, after having their beards shaved off, saved them preciously, in order to have them placed in their coffins, fearing that they would not be allowed to enter heaven without their beards. As for the young men, they followed the new custom with the more readiness as it made them appear more agreeable to the fair sex.

## Document 7

**Source:** Portrait of Peter the Great. Library of Congress.